



This material has been provided by Asbury Theological Seminary in good faith of following ethical procedures in its production and end use.

The Copyright law of the united States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material. Under certain condition specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to finish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be *“used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.”* If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

**By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.**

### **Contact**

B.L. Fisher Library  
Asbury Theological Seminary  
204 N. Lexington Ave.  
Wilmore, KY 40390

**B.L. Fisher Library’s Digital Content**  
[place.asburyseminary.edu](http://place.asburyseminary.edu)



**Asbury Theological Seminary**  
205 North Lexington Avenue  
Wilmore, Kentucky 40390

800.2ASBURY  
[asburyseminary.edu](http://asburyseminary.edu)

AN HISTORICAL STUDY AND EVALUATION  
OF  
CHILDREN'S HYMNS

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of Religious Education  
Asbury Theological Seminary

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Religious Education

---

by  
Lila Lillian Clausen  
May 1950

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM . . . . .	1
II. MUSICAL HERITAGE OF THE EARLY CENTURIES . . .	3
Hebrew Music . . . . .	3
Davidic Era . . . . .	4
Hebrew Musical Instruments . . . . .	5
Character of Hebrew Music . . . . .	7
The Christian Church to the Reformation . .	8
Early Christian Music . . . . .	8
Church Music under Papal Direction . . .	10
Medieval Church Music . . . . .	13
III. CHILDREN'S HYMNS OF THE REFORMATION PERIOD .	15
1530-1715 . . . . .	15
Away in a Manger . . . . .	16
O Jesu, Sweet, a Little Thing . . . . .	16
When God with Us was Dwelling Here . . .	17
1715-1780 . . . . .	17
Happy the Child . . . . .	19
Let the Dogs Delight to Bark and Bite . .	19
Birds in Their Little Nests Agree . . . .	19
How Doth the Busy Little Bee . . . . .	19
How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts .	20
Hark! My Dear, Lie Still and Slumber . .	20
Let the Potsherds of the Earth . . . . .	22

## CHAPTER

## PAGE

Dark and Bottomless the Pit . . . . .	22
Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild . . . . .	22
1780-1840 . . . . .	23
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say . . . . .	23
Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me . . . . .	24
Saviour, Breathe an Evening Blessing . . . . .	24
By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill . . . . .	25
My Country, 'Tis of Thee . . . . .	25
Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us . . . . .	26
1841-1884 . . . . .	27
I Think, When I Read That Sweet Story of Old . . . . .	28
Little Drops of Water . . . . .	29
Fling Out the Banner! . . . . .	30
Once in Royal David's City . . . . .	31
There is a Green Hill Far Away . . . . .	31
Fairest Lord Jesus . . . . .	32
There's a Friend for Little Children . . . . .	32
I am so Glad That Our Father in Heaven . . . . .	33
Hushed was the Evening Hymn . . . . .	33
Jesus Loves Me . . . . .	34
Onward Christian Soldiers . . . . .	35
For the Beauty of the Earth . . . . .	36
When Morning Gilds the Skies . . . . .	37
O Little Town of Bethlehem . . . . .	37

	111
CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. RECENT RELIGIOUS MUSIC FOR CHILDREN . . . . .	39
Beginners . . . . .	40
Musical Fitness . . . . .	40
Social Fitness . . . . .	42
Literary and Spiritual Fitness . . . . .	42
Primary Children . . . . .	43
Musical Fitness . . . . .	44
Social Fitness . . . . .	45
Literary and Spiritual Fitness . . . . .	46
Juniors . . . . .	47
Musical Fitness . . . . .	47
Social Fitness . . . . .	48
Literary and Spiritual Fitness . . . . .	49
Junior Choir . . . . .	50
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	55

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

There is no definite knowledge as to the origin of music, but Job says that at the Creation: "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Another historical hint is given in Genesis 4:21, "And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ."

The family of Lamech, apparently living within the lifetime of Adam, was creative and musical. There is no record of the type of songs they sang, but the fact that various forms of music existed is assured.

While music dates back to the origin of man, records are scarce pertaining to the participation of children in the art.

This project was an attempt to study children's hymns with emphasis on their adequateness in quantity, suitability to the age level, and depth of spiritual power.

Children. Children were interpreted as meaning persons between the ages of four and eleven, who, in the church school, fall into the age level grouping of the Beginner, Primary and Junior departments, respectively.

Hymn. By the term "hymn" was meant a prayer song addressed to God, or a praise song sung about the works of the Trinity.

It was a long time before the church realized that special hymns for children were needed. In treating the subject of children's hymns one is faced with the difficulty of lack of materials. One reason is the destruction, by busy little fingers of many generations, of hymnbooks.

Probably, in a period less enlightened concerning child psychology, many hymns were written that were not within the comprehension and plane of interest of children.

Whatever influences the emotions of a child, his attitude toward living, and his habits of self-expression, affects his stability and integration as a human being. There is no human emotion which cannot be expressed in the language of music. Realizing the force of this channel of expression, those entrusted with the religious education of children should seriously consider the type of religious music used for their worship services.

## CHAPTER II

### MUSICAL HERITAGE OF THE EARLY CENTURIES

Hebrew Music. Hymnody constitutes a part of all history. The English language is rich in hymns but it can claim no prominent place as regards the devotional lyric. Literature first appears as it came out of the forest with the chants of the priests. "The priests represented in their dances the course of the stars and scenes from the histories of Osiris and Isis."<sup>1</sup> The earliest surviving literature of the Assyrians contains hymns to the gods. They used the same type of instruments and music as the Egyptians.<sup>2</sup> The first trace of Greek literature is hymnic. The story of Tyrtaeus gives a glimpse of the early Grecian hymn and its lyric power to awaken and transfigure popular sentiment.<sup>3</sup> This type, under the inspiration of the Spirit, reached a state of perfection in the early life of the Hebrews. Their artistic perfection found expression in lyric religion.

---

<sup>1</sup> Edward Dickinson, Music in the History of the Western Church, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902, p.6.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund S. Lorenz, Church Music, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1923, pp. 192,193.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah B. Reeves, The Hymn in History and Literature, New York, The Century Company, 1924, p.14.



There is no mention made of music from the time of Noah to Jacob, but it is certain that it was employed in some way, for Laban scolded Jacob for leaving secretly, depriving him of the privilege of sending him away "with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp." <sup>4</sup> The religious ceremonies of the families were simple and improvised, but when Israel became a nation they immediately developed a system of worship including music to accompany their poetry.

The fifteenth chapter of Exodus gives an account of the rapturous Song of Deliverance which Moses and the men of Israel sang after passing through the Red Sea. Accompanied by dances and an antiphonal chorus, Miriam led her women in the responses:

Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously;  
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Davidic Era. With David began a new era in the history of music. When he was out on the hillsides as a shepherd he had time to see the wonders of the earth and sky. In the beauty of nature he saw God and expressed his feelings in song. Children admire David for his courage because they have been told the story of his battle with Goliath. A story emphasizing the influence of music is the one of David's quieting Saul's raging emotions by the power of the harp. Young minds are captivated by this story.

---

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 31:27.

Not only was he a great soloist of harp and voice, but he is the writer of many psalms that compose the most remarkable collection of sacred lyrics of any age or tongue. For hundreds of years this collection meant to the Jews a bulwark of spiritual instruction that never failed. It is hardly possible to overestimate the influence of the psalms on the religious life of the Jewish people and on the Christian Church. The song at the Last Supper was from the group of Psalms 115-118.

David organized the musical service of the tabernacle with leaders of song and directors of the great orchestra of many instruments. "David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord with all manner of instruments made of fir wood, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with castanets, and with cymbals." <sup>5</sup> In I Chronicles 23:5 it is mentioned that four thousand Levites were appointed to praise the Lord with instruments. There were also two hundred and eighty-eight skilled singers who sang to instrumental accompaniment near the altar.<sup>6</sup>

Hebrew Musical Instruments. The Hebrews never invented a musical instrument. Their musical instruments were borrowed from the patriarchal age.<sup>7</sup> The kinnor of

---

<sup>5</sup> II Samuel 6:5.

<sup>6</sup> I Chronicles 25:7.

<sup>7</sup> Lorenz, op. cit., p.206.

David was a small instrument that might be called a lyre or harp. A small drum like a tambourine was the toph. The nebel was either a harp somewhat larger than the kinnor, or possibly something similar to a guitar.

The chalil, translated "pipe," may have been an oboe or flageolet.<sup>8</sup> It is said that when the organ in the temple was played, the people on the streets of Jerusalem could not hear one another speak.<sup>9</sup> Regarding musical instruments Lorenz says:

There was not a drum to be found from Dan to Beersheba, nor a dulcimer either, and flutes, if used at all, were very rarely used. The only instrument that attained much favor, and this was the indigenous one, was the harp, which should be more properly described as a lyre than a harp, since it was a small portable instrument which the player carried about with him wherever he went, and of which we may form a fair notion if we remember the Rabbinical tradition that David used to hang his on a nail above his pillow when he went to bed. This little lyre was the great instrument in Israel and the reason it could be so was that the music of the Hebrews was in every sense of the word a vocal music. The voice transcended and outdid the instrument and the instrumental development stood still.<sup>10</sup>

The function of musical instruments in the temple service is given in the account of the reestablishment of the worship of Jehovah by Hezekiah according to the institution of David and Solomon.

---

<sup>8</sup> Dickinson, op. cit., p.22

<sup>9</sup> Arthur Elson, The Book of Musical Knowledge, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927, p.10.

<sup>10</sup> Rowbotham, The History of Music, cited by Edmund S. Lorenz, op.cit., p.207.

In II Chronicles 29:25-30, it is recorded that at the burnt offering a song of praise was raised to the accompaniment of the "instruments of David." The singers intoned the psalm and the trumpets sounded. This continued until the burnt offering was finished, after which the rite was ended with a hymn of praise sung by the Levites while the king and the people were reverent.

Character of Hebrew Music. Although musical instruments were prominent in all walks of life, they were always looked upon as satellites to poetry and song. Dramatic poetry is indicated by the book of Job and Song of Solomon. The psalms belong in the class of lyric poetry which expresses the sentiments of an organization or race. A characteristic phase of Hebrew music came as a result of the antiphonal rendering of poetry. This form lasted from the time of Genesis to the beginning of the Christian Church. The priests and the Levites sang responsively and the people answered. Even today in many services, the church has incorporated the practice of responsive reading.

The psalms possess a sublimity of thought, and abundant imagery that challenges the highest ability of a musician writing appropriate music for them. The devotional music of the Hebrews was a means to an end in that it was the agent that aroused the heart to spiritual experiences.

Accepting the harp as this symbolic agent Byron's words are true:

It softened men of iron mould  
 It gave them virtues not their own;  
 No ear so dull, no soul so cold,  
 That felt not, fired not to the tone,  
 Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne.

Thus consecrated for future use, religious music passed from the Hebrew priests to apostles, on to the church fathers who laid the foundation of worship music today.

### The Christian Church to the Reformation

Early Christian Music. From this noble heritage of song, it was an easy transition to the still more exalted hymnody of the Christian era. When Mary of Nazareth knew that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, she cried: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." <sup>11</sup>

In answering echo came the exultant strain from the lips of Zacharias: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for He hath visited and redeemed his people." <sup>12</sup>

One of the most sublime hymns was that of the heavenly host at Jesus' birth: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, good will toward men." <sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Luke 1:46,47.

<sup>12</sup> Luke 1:68.

<sup>13</sup> Luke 2:14.

The words of Simeon make a fitting climax to the hymns just mentioned: "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace according to thy word; For mine eyes have seen the salvation." <sup>14</sup>

These four hymns are better known as the "Magnificat," the "Benedictus," the "Gloria in Excelsis," and the "Nunc Dimittis." They very early found their way into the service of the church and have been in universal use from that time.

During the early centuries after Christ a sad note was rarely sounded. The disciples endured much persecution but they were joyous. In the hymns suffering and death are never mentioned, but everywhere there is a refrain of praise and triumph.

The oldest Christian hymn, also a children's hymn, was written over seventeen hundred years ago by Clement of Alexandria.

Relatively little is known of Clement, except that he was the head of the Catechetical School in Alexandria.<sup>15</sup> It is supposed that he was born in Athens and grew up in its philosophical atmosphere. Failing to find satisfaction of soul in Greek philosophy, he at last came in touch with Pantaenus, the head of this Christian Catechetical School in

---

<sup>14</sup> Luke 2:29,30.

<sup>15</sup> H. Augustine Smith, Lyric Religion, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1931, pp. 361,362.

Alexandria. Through him he found Christ the "All in All" he had been seeking. When Pantaenus left Alexandria to become a missionary, Clement took his place. In the persecution under Severus in 203, he had to leave Alexandria, the date or place of his death being unknown.

There are a variety of English translations of this hymn. The original describes Christ as the supreme Teacher in a series of metaphors - "bridle for unbroken colt," "wing of sure-flying bird," "rudder, girdle and shepherd."

Here is the first stanza literally rendered:

Bridle of untaught fools,  
Wing of unwandering birds,  
Helm and Girdle of babes,  
Shepherd of royal lambs,  
Assemble thy simple children  
To praise holily,  
To hymn guilelessly  
Christ, the guide of children.

Although a beautiful hymn, it is more suited to the age level of an adolescent of fifteen years than to a child of eight or nine years; nevertheless, it is an evident attempt to show the importance of correct religious guidance in young lives.

Church Music under Papal Direction. Hilary, who in the middle of the fourth century was bishop of the ancient city of Poitiers in Gaul, is the first Latin hymnist.<sup>16</sup> He composed hymns and prepared a hymnbook, which, unfortunately,

---

<sup>16</sup> Edward S. Ninde, Nineteen Centuries of Christian Song, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938, p.34

has been lost. The province of Gaul gave to the world Ambrose. Among the improvements made by him was the introduction of four chant tunes which seem to have been founded on ancient Greek music. The manner of congregational singing in Ambrose's time became more refined and artistic. While it is evident that in the wealth of musical appreciation the contributors of the fourth century cannot compare with the twentieth, the reforms of Ambrose were so far-reaching that they are a milestone in the evolution of Christian worship. One of his best hymns is this one for Christmas:

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,  
Come, testify thy Virgin Birth;  
All lands admire, all times applaud;  
Such is the birth that fits a God.<sup>17</sup>

Pope Celestine established antiphonal psalmody, like that of Ambrose during his reign between 422-432. The papal choir was organized about this time. In 580, some Benedictine monks, assigned by Pope Pelagius to provide singers for the papal chapel, organized a school for boys. Here the boys were trained for the Pope's choir and other branches of service.<sup>18</sup>

Two hundred years passed during which the Church reached a commanding place in the political as well as the religious world. Pope Gregory the Great felt that another

---

<sup>17</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., pp. 36,37.

<sup>18</sup> Lorenz, op. cit., p.225.



step was needed in the enrichment of public worship. He increased the number of musical modes from four to eight, completing the tonal system of the Church. Collecting the choicest melodies, he drew up an antiphonarium of hymns with their appropriate tunes, used for principal seasons of the Church.

To provide for the future, Gregory founded seminaries for the study of music, providing them with trained singers. The Gregorian chant with its solemn monotone was felt to be appropriate to the majesty of divine worship. It has lasted through the centuries and is still the leading form in nearly all the Catholic churches. It has also influenced Protestant song in the Lutheran and Anglican services.

Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans, wrote only one hymn that has been preserved, but it is so appropriate as a Palm Sunday hymn that it has been sung for a thousand years. It opens with the familiar lines:

All glory, laud and honor  
To thee, Redeemer, King  
To whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring.

A stanza of the hymn, no longer printed, but for many years regularly sung, incorporates these quaint words:

Be thou, O Lord, the rider,  
And we the little ass,  
That to God's holy city  
Together we may pass.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., p.44.

When sung by a chorus of children this hymn is effective. It has been a favorite of boy choirs, and in former times was used on Palm Sunday as a children's processional as they marched along carrying palm branches and banners.

The story is told of seven boys singing the "Gloria, laus, et honor" before the Emperor Louis, and so obtaining St. Theodulph's liberation.<sup>20</sup> This shows that the young were not neglected.

Medieval Church Music. This period immediately recalls the names of Abelard, Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thomas Aquinas, and others. The use of Greek hymns began to decline and the growth of Latin hymnody continued until the eleventh or twelfth centuries.

There are a few general characteristics of medieval church music that would be well to note. First, it was chorus music with no solos or concerted numbers. They were omitted lest they detract from the attitude of worship. For the same reason there was no instrumental accompaniment.

Belonging to this medieval period are the Latin hymns the "Veni, Creator Spiritus," or "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator," and "Veni Sancte Spiritus," or "Come, Thou Holy Paraclete." The first of these two can be traced back to the close of the

---

<sup>20</sup> William T. Brooke, "Children's Hymns," Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892, p.219.

ninth century. For a thousand years it has been sung in the Church of Rome. It is in the ritual of the Anglican Church and thus came to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The second is often ascribed to King Robert II of France.<sup>21</sup>

Two hymns of the Middle Ages which are in current use today are the "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" by Bernard of Clairvaux and "Jerusalem, The Golden" by Bernard of Cluny.

It is a singular fact that the two Bernards, both of them monks, who lived in France at the same time should have their names associated with some of our greatest hymns.

Ambrose gave the first impetus to congregational music twelve hundred years before the followers of John Huss definitely broke down the barriers. These Bohemian Brethren in 1504 sent out the first real hymnbook that ever appeared for congregational use.<sup>22</sup> The way was being prepared for a new period in divine worship.

---

<sup>21</sup> Harvey B. Marks, The Rise and Growth of English Hymnody, Philadelphia, The Blakiston Company, 1938, p.62.

<sup>22</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., p.57.

### CHAPTER III

#### CHILDREN'S HYMNS OF THE REFORMATION PERIOD

The beginning of special attention to children's hymns came during The Reformation. This chapter is divided into four parts, following closely the method of division used in Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, under the heading Children's Hymns.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter the children's hymns which were studied are discussed and quoted to emphasize the style of the writers of the Reformation period, and also that the suitability of the hymns may be shown. The first period incorporates contributions between 1530-1715:

With the Protestant Reformation in Europe came hymns in the everyday language of the people. Martin Luther, born a poor miner's son, but divinely gifted in music, encouraged the movement. His own desire was "to compose sacred hymns, so that the Word of God may dwell among the people also by means of songs." <sup>2</sup>

In 1529, he wrote "A Mighty Fortress is our God," inspired by the forty-sixth psalm. Luther loved to appeal

---

<sup>1</sup> William T. Brooke, "Children's Hymns," Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892, p.220.

<sup>2</sup> Cecilia M. Rudin, Stories of Hymns We Love, John Rudin and Company, Inc., Chicago, 1946, p.6.

to children. One of his best hymns for them is "Give Heed, My Heart, Lift Up Thine Eyes." Nothing pleased him more than to have the family gather around him while he taught them to sing.

Of Luther's thirty-seven hymns<sup>3</sup> probably the best loved for children is "Away in a Manger," thought to have been written on Christmas Eve in 1530 for his little son Hans.<sup>4</sup>

Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,  
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head,  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He  
lay  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The last stanza, simple and effective, may be sung or used as a child's prayer.

Be with me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me I pray,  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.

In 1583 there appeared a small book by William H. Hunnis containing, with other religious pieces, what he called Handful of Honisuckles.<sup>5</sup> One quaint poem is this:

O Jesu sweet, a little thing  
Sometimes doth vex me sore,  
And make me slow to give thee thanks;  
Ah, woe is me therefore.

---

<sup>3</sup> Phil Kerr, Music in Evangelism, Glendale, California, Gospel Music Publishers, 1939, p.224.

<sup>4</sup> Cecilia M. Rudin, op. cit., pp. 6,8.

<sup>5</sup> Edward S. Ninde, Nineteen Centuries of Christian Song, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938, p.84.

Thus, Jesu, see a small thing makes  
 Temptation great to be,  
 My weakness, Jesu, do behold  
 And mercie have on me. Amen.

Hunnis put music to his compositions, and this is the earliest modern use of the "Amen" at the end of hymns.<sup>6</sup>

Later came George Wither whose hymns were suited to private devotion rather than public worship. He died in 1667, having written hymns about every conceivable experience in life. For instance there is his "Rocking Hymn":<sup>7</sup>

When God with us was dwelling here,  
 In little babes he took delight;  
 Such innocents as thou, my dear!  
 Are ever precious in his sight.  
 Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;  
 Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

In 1674 Bishop Ken wrote Three Hymns for the private use of the boys of Winchester College.<sup>8</sup> He wrote the words of our Doxology in 1695 and the music was taken from the Genevan Psalter.<sup>9</sup>

#### 1715-1780:

Isaac Watts, who revolutionized hymnology, is known as the first writer of children's hymns.<sup>10</sup> As a young man of

---

<sup>6</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., p.85.

<sup>7</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup> William T. Brooke, op.cit., p.220.

<sup>9</sup> The Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, The Lutheran Hymnal, St. Louis, Mo., Central Publishing House, 1941, p.644.

<sup>10</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.220.

twenty, weary of current hymns, he wrote one of his own entitled "Behold, The Glories of The Lamb." <sup>11</sup> It proved so acceptable that he wrote more. His "Divine and Moral Songs for Children" was written in 1715 during his stay with the Abney family. He lived with them the last thirty-six years of his life and the dedication of the "Divine and Moral Songs" was to the three Abney daughters. In the preface Watts states:

Dear friends, to all that are concerned in the Education of children. It is an awful and important charge that is committed to you. The wisdom and welfare of succeeding generations are entrusted with you . . . . There is something so entertaining in rhyme and meter that it will incline children to make this part of their duty a diversion.<sup>12</sup>

Whether Watts' verses are simple enough to afford diversion for children is a matter of opinion, but they have an element that appeals to childhood. A few of these will be quoted after another paragraph from the preface:

The greatest part of this little book was composed several years ago, at the request of a friend, who has been long engaged in the work of catechising a very great number of children of all kinds, and with abundant successes. So that you will here find nothing that savours of a party. The children of high and low degree of the Church of England or Dissenters, baptized in infancy or not, may all join together in these songs.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, Great Hymns and Their Stories, London and Redhill, Lutterworth Press, 1923, p.12.

<sup>12</sup> J. B. Reeves, Hymn in History and Literature, New York and London, The Century Company, 1924, p.146.

<sup>13</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.221.

Watts did not believe in spoiling children as is indicated in the following:

Happy the child whose youngest years  
Receive instruction well;  
Who hates the sinners path and fears  
The road that leads to hell.<sup>14</sup>

Against quarrelling and fighting he wrote:

Let dogs delight to bark and bite,  
For God hath made them so;  
Let bears and lions growl and fight,  
For tis their nature to.

But children, you should never let  
Such angry passions rise;  
Your little hands were never made  
To tear each other's eyes.<sup>15</sup>

The next verse is on kindness between brothers and sisters:

Birds in their little nests agree;  
And tis a shameful sight  
When children of one family  
Fall out, and chide and fight.<sup>16</sup>

Against laziness is this hint:

How doth the busy little bee  
Improve each shining hour,  
And gather honey all the day,  
From every opening flower.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.148.

<sup>15</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>16</sup> ibid., p.149.

<sup>17</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.149.



R. E. Smith gives this verse:

How shall the young secure their hearts,  
And guard their lives from sin?  
Thy word the choicest rule imparts,  
To keep the conscience clean.<sup>18</sup>

From austere commandments to gentleness, is the contrast shown by the "Cradle Hymn," one of the sweetest songs written:

Hark! my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings, without number,  
Gently falling on thy head.<sup>19</sup>

Dr. Watts' version of the 117 Psalm, "From All That Dwell Below the Skies," is not a children's hymn, but an interesting incident involving it occurred in a large school for poor children at Lambeth Green, London:

The day's work was done, the usual singing and prayer were over, and three hundred boys were expecting in a moment to be free from authority and at play. This Psalm, by Dr. Watts had been sung to the tune of the "Portuguese Hymn." The master made a few remarks about the pleasure music produced and asked the children to try and sing the hymn again. They did so; it was done with care and much feeling. Again the request was proffered - would they like to sing it again? The reply from hundreds of voices was a simultaneous yes! It was repeated, if possible with increased delight to the boys. Half an hour of their playtime was occupied by singing praise to God by three hundred poor children, immediately singing under the shadow of the place of the Archbishop of Canterbury, at Lambeth, and the children

---

<sup>18</sup> R. E. Smith, Hymn Gems, Boston, Christopher Publishing House, 1919, p.57.

<sup>19</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., p.104.

thanked the teacher for the pleasure their own voices had afforded to themselves. The hymn and tune were fixed in their memories for life.<sup>20</sup>

Isaac Watts was born with a soul for harmony, and his thoughts easily rhymed. England had hymns, but he was a pioneer in hymns for children, though many of his writings had a stern nature. His fruitful life ended in December, 1748.<sup>21</sup>

Taking quantity and quality into consideration, Charles Wesley has been called the greatest hymn writer of all ages. Because every conceivable occasion to him called for a hymn, the total number is approximately 6,500.<sup>22</sup>

In 1763 Wesley published Hymns for Children, a collection of writings scattered among other works. It was never very popular, and with the exception of "Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild" hardly a hymn is known.<sup>23</sup>

John Wesley wrote of his brother's style:

There are two ways of writing or speaking to children: the one is, to let ourselves down to them; the other, to lift them up to us. Dr. Watts has wrote in the former way, and has succeeded admirable well, speaking to children as children, and leaving them as he found them. The following hymns are written on the other plan; they

---

<sup>20</sup> S. W. Duffield, English Hymns, New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1888, p.156.

<sup>21</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., p.96.

<sup>22</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, op. cit., p.103.

<sup>23</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.221.

contain strong and manly sense, yet expressed in such plain and easy language, as even children may understand. But when they do understand them, they will be children no longer, only in years and stature.<sup>24</sup>

Here is the comment of another:

Speaking of children it is interesting to know that Charles Wesley wrote not only on children, but for children. Unfortunately these hymns were not a success. The unmarried Watts did better than Wesley, the father of eight children. Some of the Wesley boys were prodigies, but all children are not prodigies, and perhaps the father forgot this, for most of his children's hymns were beyond the child mind. Only those of sedate years could properly sing,

Let the potsherd of the earth  
Boast their virtues, beauty, birth;  
A poor guilty worm I am,  
Ransomed by the bleeding Lamb.<sup>25</sup>

Active boys and girls could hardly comprehend the doom awaiting them in this verse:

Dark and bottomless the pit  
Which on them its mouth shall close;  
Never shall they escape from it;  
There they shall in endless woes  
Weep, and wail, and gnash their teeth,  
Die an everlasting death.<sup>26</sup>

There is actual relief in reading,

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
Look upon a little child;  
Pity my simplicity,  
Suffer me to come to thee.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.221.

<sup>25</sup> Edward S. Ninde, op. cit., p.116.

<sup>26</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>27</sup> loc. cit.

If Wesley had written many songs such as this, he could easily be crowned the sweetest singer for children the world has produced.

1780-1840:

The establishment of Sunday School by Robert Raikes in 1780 resulted in people thinking Watts' hymns not sufficient, consequently, many new hymns were written.<sup>28</sup>

One of these was "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say," by Horatius Bonar who was born in Scotland in 1808.<sup>29</sup> "His imagination together with his flair for expression gave him his unusual power as a hymnist. No other Scot has approached him in the number and popularity of hymns."<sup>30</sup> Probably his most popular hymn is:

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
Come unto me and rest;  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon my breast!<sup>31</sup>

His early hymns for Sunday School, "I Lay My Sins on Jesus" and "I Was a Wandering Sheep," are not used extensively today.

---

<sup>28</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.222.

<sup>29</sup> A. E. Bailey, The Gospel in Hymns, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950, p.451.

<sup>30</sup> ibid., p.452.

<sup>31</sup> H. Augustine Smith, The New Hymnal for American Youth, New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1930, p.124.

Mrs. Mary Duncan, sister-in-law to Dr. Bonar, wrote a lovely hymn prayer for children in 1839:<sup>32</sup>

Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me;  
Bless Thy little lamb tonight;  
Thro' the darkness be Thou near me,  
Keep me safe till morning light.<sup>33</sup>

Her twenty-three hymns were written for her little children, too young to understand them. They were published after Mrs. Duncan's death.<sup>34</sup>

Another evening hymn was written by James Edmeston in 1820. It has the same thought as:

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray thee Lord, my soul to keep.<sup>35</sup>

The tune to Edmeston's "Saviour, Breathe an Evening Blessing" was written by George Stebbins in 1878:

Saviour, breathe an evening blessing,  
Ere repose our spirits seal:  
Sin and want we come confessing  
Thou canst save and Thou canst heal.<sup>36</sup>

Reginald Heber (1783-1826), author of "Holy, Holy" and "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," also wrote a children's hymn that is sung today more by adults than children.<sup>37</sup> It

---

<sup>32</sup> A. E. Bailey, op. cit., p.455.

<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth H. Bonsall, Famous Hymns with Stories and Pictures, Philadelphia, The Union Press, 1923, p.24.

<sup>34</sup> A. E. Bailey, op. cit., p.455.

<sup>35</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.24.

<sup>36</sup> ibid., p.25.

<sup>37</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.218.

is "By Cool Siloam's Shady Hill":

By cool Siloam's shady rill,  
How fair the lily grows!  
How sweet the breath, beneath the hill,  
Of Sharon's dewy rose!

Lo! such the child whose early feet  
The paths of peace have trod,  
Whose secret heart, with influence sweet,  
Is upward drawn to God.<sup>38</sup>

It was in 1832 that the beloved "America" was written. Lowell Mason, director of a children's choir in Boston, had received a collection of German songs for children and asked his friend, Samuel F. Smith, to translate any that he found suited for that purpose.<sup>39</sup>

Dr. Smith, noticing a spirited tune with patriotic German words, wrote the words to "America," unconscious that the English had chosen that tune for "God Save the King." On July 4th of 1832, Dr. Smith heard his song sung enthusiastically by the children's choir of Lowell Mason:<sup>40</sup>

My country, 'tis of thee,  
Sweet land of liberty,  
Of thee I sing,  
Land where my fathers died,  
Land of the pilgrim's pride,  
From every mountain side  
Let freedom ring.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Authority of General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, Free Methodist Hymnal Winona Lake, Indiana, 1910, p.439.

<sup>39</sup> A. E. Bailey, op. cit., p.37.

<sup>40</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.33.

<sup>41</sup> Authority of General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, op. cit., p.450.

Smith translated many German songs for Mason. "As a result, Mason published two volumes one of which 'Juvenile Lyre,' was the first song collection for children printed in America." <sup>42</sup>

Publications for children during this period between 1780 and 1840 must not be overlooked. In 1810 Ann and Jane Taylor published Hymns for Infant Minds, making "previous collections incomplete." <sup>43</sup> The formation of the Sunday School Union provided an authorized hymn book. The second edition of this was published in 1816.<sup>44</sup>

Dorothy Ann Thrupp wrote hymns for the Children's Friend. <sup>45</sup> Her best known hymn is "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us," written in 1836:

Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us,  
Much we need Thy tenderest care;  
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,  
For our use Thy folds prepare:  
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus,  
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.<sup>46</sup>

William Batchelder Bradbury (1816-1868) who did more than any man in organizing singing classes and music

---

<sup>42</sup> Bailey, op. cit., p.491.

<sup>43</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.222.

<sup>44</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>45</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>46</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.37.

festivals for children,<sup>47</sup> composed the tune to "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us." Bradbury devoted his time to children's music, and composed tunes with lively rhythm, freshness, and melody that were attractive to children. His juvenile singing classes and music festivals were so successful that interest was aroused in having music instruction in the schools. At one of his festivals he had a chorus of a thousand children.<sup>48</sup> The scene is described as follows:

The sight itself was a thrilling one. A thousand were seated on a gradually rising platform; about two-thirds of them were girls dressed uniformly in white with white wreath and blue sash; the boys were dressed in jackets with collars turned over in Byronic style. When all were ready, a chord was struck on the piano - the thousand instantly arose and the singing which followed made both sight and sound a thrilling one.<sup>49</sup>

With Lowell Mason, Thomas Hastings, and George Root, Bradbury is said to have founded our modern church and Sunday School music. His hymn tunes incorporate a light movement which he rightfully felt appealed to children.<sup>50</sup>

#### 1841-1884:

In the year 1841 Miss Jemima Thompson Luke discovered a Greek tune that would make an excellent children's hymn if

---

<sup>47</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.37.

<sup>48</sup> ibid., p.38.

<sup>49</sup> ibid.

<sup>50</sup> ibid., pp.38,39.



it had appropriate words. One day while riding the stagecoach the old melody began running through her mind and there she wrote:

I think, when I read that sweet story of old,  
When Jesus was here among men,  
How He called little children as lambs to His fold,  
I should like to have been with them then.

Mrs. Luke taught the hymn to her Sunday School class who sang it one day when Rev. Mr. Thompson, Mrs. Luke's father, heard it. Turning to his younger daughters he asked,

"Who wrote that? I never heard it before?" <sup>51</sup>

"Jemima made it," they replied.

Thompson, being pleased with his daughter's accomplishment, secretly sent her song to The Sunday School magazine, where it was published.<sup>52</sup>

At the splendid London convention of the Christian Endeavor Society in 1900, when Mrs. Luke was eighty-seven years of age, this hymn was given a new musical setting by Rev. Carey Bonner, and was sung at the Junior rally by 1,200 Juniors.<sup>53</sup>

The book Ancient Hymns for Children was published by I. Williams, also author of Hymns on the Catechism.<sup>54</sup> With more success Dr. John Mason Neale published the first

---

<sup>51</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, op. cit., p.128.

<sup>52</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.44.

<sup>53</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>54</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.222.

series of Hymns for Children.<sup>55</sup> Dr. Neale, an able translator, is known "in his zeal for a better Children's Hymnody, and his carols and original hymns." <sup>56</sup>

Charles F. Barnard compiled the Unitarian Chapel Hymn Book (fourth edition) in 1842.<sup>57</sup> Barnard devoted his life to help the neglected children of Boston. He avoided hymns directly written for children, but wrote with a simplicity that would suit mission chapels as well as Sunday Schools.<sup>58</sup>

In a reading book published for use in the Boston Primary Schools, U.S.A. in 1845, appeared for the first time the beautiful children's hymn, beginning -

Little drops of water,  
Little grains of sand,  
Make the mighty ocean  
And the beauteous land.<sup>59</sup>

The author of this hymn was Mrs. Julia Carney, a teacher in one of the Boston Schools.<sup>60</sup> Bishop Bickersteth, by adding another verse made it more complete:

Little ones in glory,  
Swell the angels song  
Make us meet, dear Saviour,  
For their holy throng.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.222.

<sup>56</sup> L. B. Benson, The English Hymn, New York, Hodder & Stoughton, George H. Doran Company, 1915, p.505.

<sup>57</sup> L. F. Benson, op. cit., p.46.

<sup>58</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>59</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, op. cit., p.140.

<sup>60</sup> ibid., p.141.

<sup>61</sup> ibid., p.142.

Every children's hymn book should include the missionary song, "Fling Out the Banner! Let it Float," written by G. W. Doane in response to a request of the girls of St. Mary's Hall, Burlington, N.J.:<sup>62</sup>

Fling out the banner! let it float  
 Skyward and seaward, high and wide,  
 Our glory, only in the cross;  
 Our only hope, the crucified! <sup>63</sup>

Doane also wrote the expressive evening hymn, "Softly, Now the Light of Day." <sup>64</sup>

Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander (1823-1895) published Hymns for Little Children in 1848.<sup>65</sup> A book of seventy-two pages, it was supposed to cover the points a child learned in the Church of England up until the time of confirmation.<sup>66</sup>

An explanation of some hymns is given by Sheppard:<sup>67</sup>

"Do no sinful action," was written to explain the Baptismal promise to "renounce the devil and all his works,"; "All things bright and beautiful," expanding the truth of "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." "Once in royal David's city," drawn from the words "And in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

---

<sup>62</sup> A. E. Bailey, op. cit., p.486.

<sup>63</sup> R. E. Smith, op. cit., p.75.

<sup>64</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.286.

<sup>65</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.222.

<sup>66</sup> H. Augustine Smith, Lyric Religion, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1931, p.402.

<sup>67</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, op. cit., p.93.

Here is "Once in Royal David's City":

Once in royal David's city  
 Stood a lowly cattle shed  
 Where a mother laid her Baby  
 In a manger for His bed:  
 Mary was that mother mild,  
 Jesus Christ her little child.<sup>68</sup>

Perhaps the most famous of her children's hymns is "There is a Green Hill Far Away," written to interpret the words, "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried." It is said the first verse was suggested by the fact that Mrs. Alexander, on her way to the city of Derry, passed by a "little grass covered hill" which always reminded her of Calvary:<sup>69</sup>

There is a green hill far away,  
 Without a city wall,  
 Where the dear Lord was crucified,  
 Who died to save us all.

Refrain: Oh, dearly, dearly has he loved,  
 And we must love him too  
 And trust in his redeeming blood,  
 And try his works to do.

Dr. Julian says of her hymns,

Charmingly simple and tender, clear in dogma, and of poetical beauty combining the plainness of Watts with the feeling for and with the childhood of the Taylor sisters, and uniting with both the liturgical associations of the English Prayer Book, they remain unequalled and unapproachable.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> Paul N. Crusius, Elmhurst Hymnal, St. Louis, Eden Publishing House, 1921, p.19.

<sup>69</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, op. cit., p.93.

<sup>70</sup> W. T. Brooke, op. cit., p.222.

An excellent children's hymn, sometimes known as the "Crusaders Hymn," is "Fairest Lord Jesus," fortunately found in most hymnals. It was translated from the German in 1851 both author and translator being unknown. It is an incomparable nature hymn.

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,  
O Thou of God and man the Son;  
Thee will I cherish; Thee will I honor,  
Thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.<sup>71</sup>

The Sunday school teacher of Albert Midlane is the person responsible for shaping the thoughts and purposes of the latter's life. "This teacher was a constant reader of poetry" and "lovingly guided Midlane's appreciation and efforts in this field." <sup>72</sup>

Midlane wrote hundreds of hymns, but "There's a Friend for Little Children" is the most popular:

There's a Friend for little children  
Above the bright blue sky,  
A Friend who never changes,  
Whose love will never die;  
Our earthly friends may fail us,  
And change with changing years,  
This friend is always worthy  
Of that dear name he hears.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.269.

<sup>72</sup> Carl F. Price, One Hundred and One Hymn Stories, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1923, p.29.

<sup>73</sup> Bishops Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Hymnal, no publisher, 1919, p.486.

Few hymns are learned by children as quickly as  
Phillip Bliss' simple lines:

I am so glad that our Father in heaven  
Tells of His love in the Book He has given:  
Wonderful things in the Bible I see,  
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.<sup>74</sup>

According to Sheppard, this hymn originated from the  
hymn with the chorus, "Oh, How I Love Jesus!" Bliss (1838-  
1876) was singing this chorus in a meeting when the thought  
came to him that Christ's love for him was greater than his  
poor love for the Master. As a result he went home "and  
there wrote this most attractive and beautiful children's  
hymn." <sup>75</sup>

Stories of children are found here and there in the  
Bible; Miriam watching baby Moses, Daniel standing for his  
convictions, etc. One of the best evening hymns that tells  
the complete story of the call of Samuel, is "Hushed Was the  
Evening Hymn" by James D. Burns, written in 1857.<sup>76</sup>

Here are the first two verses:

Hushed was the evening hymn,  
The temple courts were dark;  
The lamp was burning dim  
Before the sacred ark;  
When suddenly a voice divine  
Rang through the silence of the shrine.

---

<sup>74</sup> W. J. Limmer Sheppard, op. cit., p.90.

<sup>75</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>76</sup> Paul N. Crucius, op. cit., p.121.

The old man, meek and mild,  
 The priest of Israel slept;  
 His watch the temple child,  
 The Little Levite, kept;  
 And what from Eli's sense was sealed  
 The Lord to Hannah's son revealed.<sup>77</sup>

The best known children's hymn over all the world is none other than "Jesus Loves Me," written by Anna Bartlett Warner<sup>78</sup> in 1860. That same year William B. Bradbury composed the tune.<sup>79</sup>

Jesus loves me, this I know,  
 For the Bible tells me so;  
 Little ones to Him belong;  
 They are weak, but He is strong.

The melody for "Jesus Loves Me" is more suited for small children than the melody of "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us," which Bradbury also composed. It is more simple with much repetition in the chorus. "Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us," with its varied tune, is suited for older children.

Anna Bartlett Warner also wrote "We Would See Jesus," "The Song of a Tired Servant," and "O Little Child, Lie Still and Sleep."<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> Paul N. Crucius, op. cit., p.121.

<sup>78</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.52.

<sup>79</sup> Frederick Hall, Know Your Hymns?, Boston, Wilde Company, 1944, p.19.

<sup>80</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.52.

Sabine Baring-Gould wrote for children, "Onward Christian Soldiers" in 1865.<sup>81</sup> The following are his words concerning the song:

It was written in a very simple fashion, without a thought of publication. Whitmonday is a great day for school festivals in Yorkshire, and one Whitmonday it was arranged that our school should join its forces with that of a neighboring village. I wanted the children to sing when marching from one village to the other, but couldn't think of anything quite suitable, so I sat up at night resolved to write something myself. "Onward Christian Soldiers" was the result. It was written in great haste (less than fifteen minutes, it is said). Certainly nothing has surprised me more than its popularity.<sup>82</sup>

Here is the first verse:

Onward Christian soldiers, Marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus Going on before!  
Christ, the royal Master, Leads against the foe;  
Forward into battle, See His banners go.

Refrain: Onward Christian Soldiers  
Marching as to war  
With the cross of Jesus  
Going on before!<sup>83</sup>

At the World's Sunday School Convention in Washington, D. C. in May, 1910, it was arranged that this hymn be sung in Sunday Schools all over the world on Sunday, May 22, 1910. For this occasion, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" was translated into more than one hundred languages.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> A. E. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p.372.

<sup>82</sup> S. A. Hunter, Music of the Gospel, New York, the Abingdon Press, 1932, p.206

<sup>83</sup> Paul N. Crusius, *op. cit.*, p.186.

<sup>84</sup> C. M. Rudin, *op. cit.*, p.54.



In Baring-Gould's "Now the Day is Over," there are two lines written especially for children:

Grant to little children  
Visions bright of thee <sup>85</sup>

A Unitarian minister who lived in Troy, New York<sup>86</sup> wrote "For the Beauty of the Earth," in 1864.<sup>87</sup> His name was Folliott Pierpont. The hymn's "unquestioning acceptance of the goodness of the earth and of all that goes with life makes it a song of perennial youth, a song by youth for youth." <sup>88</sup>

The third verse expresses in simple language what children appreciate:

For the joy of human love,  
Brother, sister, parent, child,  
Friends on earth, and friends above,  
For all gentle tho'ts and mild,  
Lord of all, to thee we raise  
This our hymn of grateful praise.<sup>89</sup>

Many children's hymns envelop the thought of nature, and rightly so. Here is another entitled "When Morning Gilds the Skies." It is of German origin<sup>90</sup> and was translated

---

<sup>85</sup> Frederick Hall, op. cit., p.89

<sup>86</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.294.

<sup>87</sup> S. A. Hunter, op. cit., p.204.

<sup>88</sup> ibid., p.206.

<sup>89</sup> Paul N. Crusius, op. cit., p.32.

<sup>90</sup> J. B. Reeves, op. cit., p.263.

by Edward Caswell in 1873:<sup>91</sup>

When morning gilds the skies  
My heart, awaking, cries,  
    May Jesus Christ be praised!  
Alike at work and prayer,  
To Jesus I repair  
    May Jesus Christ be praised! <sup>92</sup>

The rising melody seems to catch the atmosphere of a waking world. For morning worship this hymn is especially joyous.

A Christmas hymn essential to every collection of children's hymns is the descriptive "O Little Town of Bethlehem." The author, Phillips Brooks, toured the Holy Land in 1865 and the scenes of Bethlehem made deep impressions on him.<sup>93</sup> He told of the town sleeping quietly, unaware that Jesus was coming:

O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.<sup>94</sup>

The Methodist Sunday School Hymnbook was published in 1879, containing 589 hymns.<sup>95</sup> "This," says Julian, "in our

---

<sup>91</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.64.

<sup>92</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>93</sup> A. E. Bailey, op. cit., p.58.

<sup>94</sup> C. M. Rudin, op. cit., p.59.

<sup>95</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.223.

judgment, ranks first in merit of any collection for children yet made, and is approached only by Mrs. Carey Brock and the Rev. G. S. Barrett."<sup>96</sup> Dr. W. Fleming Stevenson's Hymns for Church and Home, published in 1873, contained 100 hymns for children.<sup>97</sup>

This closes the survey of children's hymns between 1562 and 1884. Many hymns suitable for the use of children are not mentioned. In this chapter, only those hymns written professedly for children were discussed.

---

<sup>96</sup> William T. Brooke, op. cit., p.223.

<sup>97</sup> loc. cit.

## CHAPTER IV

### RECENT RELIGIOUS MUSIC FOR CHILDREN

Fortunately for children more attention has been given to religious music for them in recent years. Music has been included in the research work of religious education, thus its importance has been more keenly felt. McAll says that "any plan for musical awakening in the church will probably begin with the music used in children's worship."<sup>1</sup> Teachers are becoming aware that the concepts which they wish to teach or impart to the child are clarified and made more meaningful through music.

Much thought should be taken, therefore, in choosing music in the church school. The positive impressions made on children as a result of using hymns will depend upon the fitness of the music. A child's great gift of imagination, his sense of the unseen, is developed by the music he hears. Consequently, through music the unseen thing becomes real. Since religion deals with the unseen, the right kind of religious music can be an agent in developing in the child a warm religious experience with Christ.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Reginald L. McAll, Practical Church School Music, New York, The Abingdon Press, 1932, p.160.

<sup>2</sup> ibid., pp. 145,146.

While much music has been written for the church school child, very few hymns are included. "We Would See Jesus" (1913), "I Would Be True" (1917), "Glad That I Live Am I" (1909), and "Lord of Health, Thou Life Within Us" (1925),<sup>3</sup> are several of the group of hymns that are in use.

Music in the Beginner, Primary, and Junior departments respectively will be discussed in this chapter with regard to its musical, social, literary and spiritual fitness. While each of these concepts interlock, they are exclusively important.

Beginners (4-6). The two or three years before a child starts to school should be preparatory years for future experiences. A teacher of Beginners has much opportunity to introduce to a child appreciation of the finer things of life through music.

Musical Fitness. Long before a child can read he sings the songs he has heard, although the words may be incorrect. Children respond to rhythm in their musical development before they respond to tone.<sup>4</sup> In considering the musical quality of music for beginners, it is necessary to regard the range, rhythm and harmony suited to them.

---

<sup>3</sup> Mildred M. Eakin, Teaching Junior Boys and Girls, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1934, p.187.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth McE. Shields, Music in the Religious Growth of Children, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943, p.36.

Range. The range of a child's singing voice is highly correlated with his physical development. Shields says:

Beginning with a limited range, a child acquires other notes until, by the time he is about nine years of age, he has reached the range of most adults.<sup>5</sup>

Shields also says that the Beginners' best notes are from G to E<sup>b</sup> on the staff.<sup>6</sup> Keeping this in mind, it follows that songs that are light and sprightly, with notes that are slightly higher than average on the staff, make a suitable range for Beginners.

Rhythm and Harmony. While the rhythm of a song may be appealing, it should never be "jazzy" and in the case of a hymn being used as a prayer, the movement should be gentle and quiet. The harmony used in songs for Beginners and Nursery children should be studied so that the children will not be given something too difficult for preschool children. Much of this is due to an inadequate sense of pitch. Small ears do not hear well, and small vocal cords have a difficult time in producing what they do hear.<sup>7</sup> If the harmony is too heavy it will overshadow the melody, leaving the child confused as to the proper tune. An easy melody, harmonized in a simple way will let the hymn or song be open to speak to little children.

---

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth McE. Shields, op. cit., p.37.

<sup>6</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup> Reginald L. McAll, op. cit., p.160.

Social Fitness. To be effective, the music must suit the group and the occasion by stressing things that interest children of the Beginner age. These children enjoy play-mates, the joy of sharing, the home, love, etc. A teacher of Beginners, choosing a theme for a unit that covers three or four Sundays, could use "God's Gifts To Us."<sup>8</sup> In deciding upon a song that would embody the thought of friends and home, a wise selection would be "Father, We Thank Thee":

Father, we thank Thee for the night,  
And for the pleasant morning light;  
For rest and food and loving care,  
And all that makes the world so fair.

Help us to do the things we should,  
To be to others kind and good;  
In all we do, in work or play,<sup>9</sup>  
To grow more loving every day.<sup>9</sup>

Literary and Spiritual Fitness. Symbolic words are one of the greatest difficulties a child meets, and there is no solution to the problem except in avoiding such words or giving them an easy explanation when possible. Still more hazardous than symbolic words are difficult ideas.<sup>10</sup> A four year old child may understand the words "brother," "sister," "mother," but not know what the word "family" means. Many

---

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth McE. Shields, op. cit., p.32.

<sup>9</sup> M. M. Wyckoff, A Child's Book of Hymns, New York, Random House, 1945, p.28.

<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth McE. Shields, op. cit., p.29.

Beginners are taught songs such as "We're Marching to Zion," and given absolutely no idea as to what "Zion" means. To have a lasting value to the child, the religious music he sings must lie within his plane of comprehension.

Keeping in mind the necessary aim of the church school, hymns for Beginners should have maximum spiritual value. Although trees, flowers, birds, etc., are intriguing to small children, these things should be instrumental in pointing them to their Shepherd and His love. The perennial favorite "Jesus Loves Me" is an ideal song for Beginners in that it possesses the necessary qualities of fitness for them. Because of its suitability it is and will remain a classic.

Shields gives the following sources of music for Beginners:

Fun with Music, Mary Jarmon Nelson  
Songs for the Little Child, Baker and Kohlfaat  
Song and Play for Children, Danielson and Conant  
Worship and Conduct Songs for Beginners and Primaries,  
 Shields  
Singing Time, Coleman and Thorn  
Another Singing Time, Coleman and Thorn  
Songs We Sing, Leatherwood  
When the Little Child Wants to Sing, Laufer  
Step a Song, Cumpson and Daniels<sup>11</sup>

Primary Children (6-8). Primary children make much progress musically because they are of school age and there is a "readiness" and interest in learning. Songs that are

---

<sup>11</sup> ibid., p.38.



joyous still hold first place in their preference, but they enjoy hymns that induce formal worship such as "Fairest Lord Jesus" and "For the Beauty of the Earth."

Musical Fitness. Many of the same principles of musical fitness in Beginners' songs are applicable with respect to songs for Primary children. "A Primary child does not increase the upward range so much as the lower." <sup>12</sup> Among those of this age are some who do not sing naturally. "They cannot find the notes, and they force the tone so that the pitch is uncertain and the quality pinched and harsh." <sup>13</sup> If this problem is considered immediately, their voices may be developed with the help of teachers who help them relax and build up confidence in themselves.

Primary children love to sing the songs they learned in the Beginner Department, but their appreciation extends to hymns such as "When Morning Gilds the Skies," "I Would Be True," "Away in a Manger," "I Think When I Read," "Saviour, Like a Shepherd," and others. Their interest also reaches to music that is beyond their actual use. Listening to music may stimulate a desire to work or interpret the atmosphere of a picture.<sup>14</sup> When a picture such as "The

---

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.37.

<sup>13</sup> Reginald L. McAll, *op. cit.*, p.161.

<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth McE. Shields, *op. cit.*, p.107.

"Angelus" has been introduced and discussed, the children enjoy hearing someone play Gounod's "L'Angelus," because the music suggests a bell ringing in the distance.<sup>15</sup>

Social Fitness. Because of their imagination, Primary children love stories and music that demand the use of it. The story of David and his harp is excellent because the children imagine the sound of the wind in the trees, water falling on rocks, and songs of birds.<sup>16</sup>

When the Primary children are studying children of many races through pictures, stories, and discussion, to summarize what has been learned previously, a song is effective. One that is easy but has a direct message is "Jesus Loves the Little Children":

Jesus loves the little children  
All the children of the world.  
Red and yellow, black and white,  
They are precious in His sight.  
Jesus loves the little children of the world.

Another more suited to the Junior mind is:

We're children of one Father,  
No matter where we are--  
In sunny lands, or island strands,  
Beneath the northern star,  
And if some play a happy game  
And others sing a song,  
We seem to know across the miles  
Although the miles are long.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> ibid., p.108.

<sup>16</sup> ibid., p.89

<sup>17</sup> Shields, op. cit., p.49, citing Nancy Byrd Turner in Elementary Magazine.

After studying ways of the Irish children, the Primary child finds an instrumental version of "Londonderry Air" enjoyable. One of the Negro spirituals he would understand is, "Lord, I Want to be a Christian":

Lord, I want to be a Christian  
 In my heart, in my heart,  
 Lord, I want to be a Christian In my heart.  
 In my heart, In my heart,  
 Lord, I want to be a Christian, In my heart.<sup>18</sup>

Literary and Spiritual Fitness. To combine literary and spiritual values in material suitable for children is difficult. "Fortunately, that which has literary merit, and that which has religious value are not at cross purposes."<sup>19</sup> Religious words simple enough for children can often be written by a great writer. To be a truly great song, words and music must be "wedded" inseparably. Neither should take pre-eminence, but both should unite to exalt the message.

For Primary children Shields suggests the following sources of musical material:<sup>20</sup>

Song and Play for Children, Danielson and Conant  
Worship and Conduct Songs for Beginners and Primaries,  
 Shields  
Songs for the Little Child, Baker and Kohlfaat  
Primary Music and Worship, Laufer  
Sing, Children, Sing, Thomas

---

<sup>18</sup> ibid., p.109.

<sup>19</sup> ibid., p.31.

<sup>20</sup> ibid., p.38.

Juniors (9-11). Children in the Junior department sing three age type hymns:<sup>21</sup> first, those they learned when younger which may be helpful because of interest over wide age span, or, too juvenile; secondly, there are those which are suitable to Juniors; then there are adult hymns that may mean to a Junior just what the words suggest to him.

To a certain degree this is inevitable. Not all Primary hymns are discarded in the Junior department, and many hymns for Juniors are standard adult hymns; nevertheless, sound judgment should be used in selecting adult material for children. Some universal age hymns like "This is My Father's World," "There is a Green Hill Far Away," "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies," learned in childhood, also form an essential part of an adult's hymn repertoire.

Musical Fitness. Since Juniors are very active, their music must be lively and rhythmic except when used for creating a worshipful mood. An introspective hymn is not good for Juniors, but they will certainly respond positively to "Marching With the Heroes"<sup>22</sup> or "Onward Christian Soldiers." A hymn should be big enough to challenge the thought and feeling of a ten year old, but not so big that he cannot understand it.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> McAll, op. cit., p.158.

<sup>22</sup> Mildred M. Eakin, op. cit., p.187.

<sup>23</sup> ibid., p.188.

In range Juniors are practically adult, and have an increased ability to use notes in the lower register.<sup>24</sup> In rhythm and harmony, they enjoy the stately beats of "God of Our Fathers" as well as the songs of march tempo.

Currently popular are "action songs" that make use of hand motions while singing. "The Faith Line," "Wide, Wide as the Ocean," "Climb Up Sunshine Mountain," and "Rolled Away" are good examples. Children always love the choruses and want to sing them, but a wise teacher will explain the meaning of the words to her children and make certain that they understand them before she teaches the accompanying gestures.

Social Fitness. Appropriateness to the occasion is another way to express social fitness. A group of Junior boys and girls sitting in a dull, bare, unattractive room singing "This is My Father's World," cannot possibly get an experience as rich as if they were seated on green grass under waving branches. Of course the natural setting cannot always be obtained, but through pictures, imaginative words and nature objects, the right atmosphere can be created.

Again, "O Master Workman of the Race" is more appropriate than a nature hymn to sing in a workroom where Junior boys are making church school cabinets.

---

<sup>24</sup> Shields, op. cit., p.37.

Literary and Spiritual Fitness. The hymns suitable for the mental age of Juniors are often too juvenile in content for their interest. Sometimes when the poetry is good, no suitable music can be found. This is why the tunes of the classic old church hymns are many times used as a setting for children's hymns.<sup>25</sup>

Here is an observation of McAll:<sup>26</sup>

The best hymnbooks for church school use have one element in common. While they vary considerably as to their content, arrangement, and appearance, they present a united struggle being waged against the insipid popular commercial books whose real excuse for a large sale is their cheapness. A careful examination of one of these songbooks shows that the great hymns of our faith are generally relegated to odd corners of the book, often without their tunes, while the veriest trash is given prominence. Phrases like "blossom bells" or "lily bells," a chorus title such as "Look Him in the eye and Smile," or a line like "The darling little birdies are singing, glad and gay" are common.

The Junior leader often finds himself at a loss concerning suitable hymns. Mildred Eakin states:<sup>27</sup>

But the fact remains that at present the Juniors are in a sort of "No Man's Land" as regards satisfactory hymns--the needs of younger children on the one hand and young people on the other hand being met more fully than the Junior needs.

The following is recommended source material by

---

<sup>25</sup> ibid., p.37.

<sup>26</sup> McAll, op. cit., pp. 155,156.

<sup>27</sup> Eakin, op. cit., p.190.

Shields for Juniors:<sup>28</sup>

Singing Worship, Thomas

Musical Moments in Worship, Thomas

Junior Hymns and Songs, revised edition, Shields

Hymns for Junior Worship, Curry

Junior Church School Hymnal

The Junior Choir. Sacred music should meet high standards. What are the standards or principles that should guide a Junior choir? The following suggestions are taken from Junior Choir Music.<sup>29</sup>

1. Churchliness. The music should be an offering to God, not entertainment for the congregation. Aesthetic principles of unity, balance, variety and other criteria which apply to any work of art should apply to Junior choir music.

2. Meaningfulness. Ideas such as praise, love, and holiness should be sought. A literary and theological content beyond the comprehension of a child should be avoided.

3. Suitability to the child voice. The tune should stay within the range of the staff and should not stay long on high notes.

4. Unity between music and words. The words and music of many hymns such as "For the Beauty of the Earth" are perfectly united and the unity would be spoiled by additional decoration.

---

<sup>28</sup> Shields, op. cit., pp.38,39.

<sup>29</sup> Junior Choir Music, Wilmore, Kentucky, Asbury Theological Seminary, 1948.

5. Appropriateness: To the church and to the occasion. Junior Choir Anthems are inexpensive, but a discerning director will see that they violate many of the above principles.

Below is a list of collections that are usually free from objectionable features:

Motets and Chorales for Treble Choir, edited by Walter Buszin.  
Early Junior Choir Album, edited by Sheldon Foote.  
Aeolian Collection of Anthems for Two-part Chorus,  
 edited by Peter Lutkin.  
Green Hill Junior Choir Book, edited by Katherine K. Davis.

On Choir rehearsals:

A choir director who leads interesting dynamic rehearsals will have no trouble in holding the choir members. They will come again and again because they enjoy both rehearsals and services, because they rarely have to be ashamed of the choir's performance, because they observe steady improvement in the choir's singing.<sup>31</sup>

An interested choir director will make a continuous study of methods, saving time, expressing ideas clearly, and improving performance.

If recent religious music has only an infectious jingle, a message not natural for a growing child, or does not point the child to a loving Father and his attributes, then the hymn has missed its purpose and affords no direct spiritual blessing.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> McAll, op. cit., p.158.

<sup>31</sup> Junior Choir Music, Wilmore, Kentucky, Asbury, Theological Seminary, 1948.



In religious music for children the guiding principle must be to ultimately lead the child to a right relationship with Christ.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It has been seen that little religious music was written for children before the Protestant Reformation. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries some writers of stately hymns also wrote verses for children that emphasized a mature theology for immature minds. Their sincerity implies devotion to God and a zeal and concern for future adults, but no matter how excellent the material they produced, care must constantly be taken that it is not beyond a child's intellectual or spiritual grasp.

Sensing the problem, writers of recent religious music for children have written hymns and choruses to suit the age level, juvenile interest, and social need, but in so doing have often come short intellectually and spiritually.

Undoubtedly, no writer has intentionally produced inadequate material, and, fortunately, there is music that lifts the highest aspirations of a child to God, but these sources are obviously all too few.

It has been shown that there is insufficient material in hymns for children. The Reformation writers of children's hymns gave a prominent place to spiritual values, but little to the mental age of children, attempting to inspire a child's mind to the adult level. Contemporary writers, with their

knowledge of psychology and vague spiritual objectives, have often starved his soul of musical material that would be of permanent value.

Shields writes:<sup>1</sup>

In setting the standard high I do not mean to be discouraging to those who strive to be good writers of children's songs, but who are not great writers. They can at least keep faith with their ideals and produce nothing that is cheap and unworthy of the religion their songs express.

These foregoing objectives of the writers of the Reformation and Recent Period are highly commendable, but a combination of all the desirable features would make a more satisfactory basis on which to compose and use religious music for children.

---

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth McE. Shields, Music in the Religious Growth of Children, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943, p.31.

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BOOKS

Authority of General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, Free Methodist Hymnal. Winona Lake, Indiana: Free Methodist Publishing House, 1910. 498 pp.

Bailey, A. E., The Gospel in Hymns. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950. 600 pp.

Benson, L. F., The English Hymn. New York: Hodder and Stoughton, George H. Doran Company, 1915. 624 pp.

Bible

Bishops Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Hymnal. No publisher, 1919. 632 pp.

Bonsall, Elizabeth H., Famous Hymns with Stories and Pictures. Philadelphia: The Union Press, 1923. 136 pp.

Brooke, W. T., "Children's Hymns," Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology. New York: Charles Scribner's, 1892. 1616 pp.

Crusius, Paul N., Elmhurst Hymnal. St. Louis: Eden Publishing House, 1921. 357 pp.

Dickinson, Edward, Music in the History of the Western Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902. 426 pp.

Duffield, S. W., English Hymns. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1888. 675 pp.

Eakin, Mildred M., Teaching Junior Boys and Girls. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1934. 277 pp.

Elson, Arthur, The Book of Musical Knowledge. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927. 608 pp.

Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, The Lutheran Hymnal. St. Louis, Missouri: Central Publishing House. 858 pp.

Hall, Frederick, Know Your Hymns? Boston: W. A. Wilde Company, 1944. 140 pp.

- Hunter, S. A., Music of the Gospel. New York: The Abingdon Press, 1932. 344 pp.
- \_\_\_\_\_, compiler, Junior Choir Music. Wilmore Kentucky: Asbury Theological Seminary, 1948.
- Kerr, Phil, Music in Evangelism. Glendale, California: Gospel Music Publishers, 1939. 244 pp.
- Lorenz, Edmund S., Church Music. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1923. 466 pp.
- McAll, Reginald L., Practical Church School Music. New York: The Abingdon Press, 1932. 237 pp.
- Marks, Harvey B., The Rise and Growth of English Hymnody. Philadelphia: The Blakiston Company, 1938. 270 pp.
- Ninde, Edward S., Nineteen Centuries of Christian Song. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1938. 142 pp.
- Price, Carl F., One Hundred and One Hymn Stories. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1923. 112 pp.
- Reeves, Jeremiah B., The Hymn in the History of the Western Church. New York: The Century Company, 1924. 371 pp.
- Rudin, Cecilia M., Stories of Hymns We Love. Chicago: John Rudin and Company, Incorporated, 1946. 88 pp.
- Sheppard, W. J. Limmer, Great Hymns and Their Stories. London and Redhill: Lutterworth Press, 1923. 180 pp.
- Shields, Elizabeth McE., Music in the Religious Growth of Children. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943. 128 pp.
- Smith, H. Augustine, Lyric Religion. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1931. 517 pp.
- Smith, H. Augustine, The New Hymnal for American Youth. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1930. 368 pp.
- Smith, R. E., Hymn Gems. Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1919. 96 pp.
- Wyckoff, M. M., A Child's Book of Hymns. New York: Random House, 1945. 44 pp.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Rowbotham, The History of Music, cited by Lorenz, Edmund S.,  
Church Music. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company,  
1923. 466 pp.

Turner, Nancy Byrd, Elementary Magazine, cited by Shields,  
Elizabeth McE., Music in the Religious Growth of  
Children. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943.  
128 pp.